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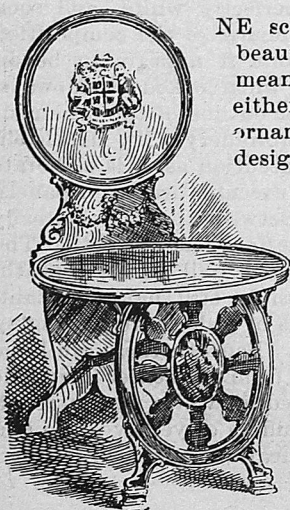
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

PURE CONTRAST IN DECORATION.



NE school of modern decoration consists in beautifying the interiors of apartments by means of self tints. Walls and ceiling are either tinted in a single monotone, or if ornamented with any species of decorative design the idea is to produce the same in a variation of the tint of the ground. The idea set forth by decorators in doing such work is, that a wall thus decorated becomes the best of all possible backgrounds for pictures and furniture. "You see," says the decorator, "by limiting by palette to a single color, I can execute any form of design by simply using different tints of the same, thus rendering the contrast of dissimilar colors entirely unnecessary."

Such a system of decoration is really to a large extent based upon the fact that it requires far greater artistic skill to manage the use of pure contrasts than when self tints are employed. We should point out, however, that decoration in simultaneous contrast is but one step removed from the kalsomined wall. Men engaged every day in the thousand and one avocations of life do not as a rule possess a very brilliant imagination. It is the men who have amassed wealth at the cost of great poverty of imagination who overrule decorators, and prefer a wall tinted in a monotone without the slightest introduction of an ornamental pattern. It is only one step beyond the plain wall to cover it with a plain stencilling either a shade darker or lighter than the ground, and we have seen ingrain wall papers thus decorated which, at a little distance, would betray no evidence of possessing any ornament whatever. The ancient Egyptians, Hindoos, Persians and Mahommedan races knew the power and beauty that belongs to the artistic arrangement of pure contrasts. The further we go back in our study of decorative art the fewer will be the range of the colors employed, but as we come down through the centuries we discover that not only were the primary and secondary colors still used in pure contrasts (as the red and green of the Egyptians), but in fact any pure color such as the lemon yellow, salmon red, and turquoise blue of the Persians. Decoration has thus naturally resolved itself, as far as color is concerned, into two great schools of treatment, the one being the school of self tints or of negative effects, and the other the school of pure contrasts or positive effects. There is one decorative law that ought to be enunciated, and that is that any effect that can be obtained by the use of self tints can also be achieved much more brilliantly and with much greater magnificence by the artistic use of color in pure contrast. Those who have seen a design in pure contrast of color wrought in Persian enameled glass, can form some idea of the rapture, of the enthusiastic rest, produced by such brilliant balances of color. The question is largely one of mud *versus* color, of the cold lifeless rest of death, and the enthusiastic rest of life.

The decorative art of to-day requires a decorator bold enough to introduce a different note of color in dado, wall space, frieze and ceiling, each color being so related to the whole that a certain well-poised balance of the whole will result. If a man wishes his wall tinted a salmon-red, there is no reason why the dado, frieze and ceiling ought to be of the same tint. It would be better to tint the dado a leather color, the frieze a peacock blue, and the ceiling a vellum tint, and in this way produce a balance corresponding to the three primary tints. The decorator will naturally inquire how the tints, so radically different, are to be thus thrown together without a proper interweaving of color so as to destroy the severity of the contrast. This, of course, is a matter entirely within the management of the practical decorator by means of the ornament he may introduce into any department of the decorative scheme. It would require a long explanation on our part, with the use of colored illustrations, to show just how the leather of the dado might be repeated on the blue of the frieze, and the blue of the frieze upon the leather of the dado. Also in like manner how the salmon-red of the wall space might be repeated upon the vellum of the ceiling, and *vice versa*. This would be going a step beyond the limits of the present article. The point we insist on at present is this: that the decorator instead of covering his wall with an unvarying tint of French gray, peacock blue, salmon-red, terra cotta, Nile green, etc., should rather divide up the wall space into the three departments of dado, field and frieze, the ceiling being a fourth department, and give each department a totally different tint to that of the other. If he be afraid at the outset to launch boldly into pure contrasts, he might try the following simultaneous combinations:

SIMULTANEOUS COMBINATIONS.

DADO.	FIELD.	FRIEZE.	CEILING.
1. Citron,	Yellow Orange,	Light Gold,	Cream.
2. Light Leather.	Yellow Cream,	Vellum,	Nearly White.
3. Venetian Red,	Flesh Color or Coral Red,	Pale Rose,	Field Rose.

Here we have the beginnings of pure contrast. This system of decoration resembles the notes of music rising into higher octaves. Having thus felt his way, as it were, in introducing ideas of contrast, he may at once boldly adopt any one of the following list of thirty-one combinations in pure contrast:

COMBINATIONS IN PURE CONTRAST.

DADO.	FIELD.	FRIEZE.	CEILING.
1. Leather,	Salmon Red,	Peacock Blue,	Vellum.
2. Pompeian Red,	Golden Brown,	Pale Blue,	Stone Color.
3. Deep Burnt Sienna or Umber,	Purple or Red,	Light Leather,	Cyan Blue.
4. Burnt Umber or Purple,	Brown or Old Gold	Inner Bark of Holly,	Very Pale Rose.
5. Deep Stone or Bluish Slate.	Ivory Yellow,	Light Gray,	White.
6. Chocolate or Indigo,	Sevres Blue,	Stone Color,	Pale Blue.
7. Deep Carnation, Dull Peacock, or Greenish Blue,	Carnation,	Crushed Strawberry,	Deep Vellum.
8. Maroon,	Lavender Blue,	Meadow Sweet,	Pale Blue.
9. Indian Red,	Warm Light Gray,	Light Stone,	Vellum.
10. Purple Brown,	Greenish Hues,	Old Gold,	Gray.
11. Indigo,	Red Orange,	Pea Green,	Ashes of Roses.
12. Indian Red (deep),	Blue Purple,	Pale Fawn,	Ivory Yellow.
13. Citron,	Yellow Orange,	Light Gold,	Cream.
14. Olive,	Warm Pinkish Gray,	Pale Fawn,	Ivory Yellow.
15. Dull Pink,	Light Neutral Blue,	Chamois,	Gray.
16. Ebony,	Bluish Green Gray	Fawn,	Vellum.
17. Golden Brown,	Pearl Blue,	Deep Ivory,	Pale Rose.
18. Deep Red,	Turtle Dove Gray,	Straw Color,	Pale Cream.
19. Withered Rose Petals,	Silver Yellow,	Dove,	Light Gray.
20. Violet,	Silver Green,	Pale Chocolate,	Vellum.
21. Chocolate (Medium),	Sky Blue,	Pale Orange,	Meadow Sweet.
22. Warm Green or Ebony,	Dark Red,	Neutral Blue	Cream.
23. Black	Warm Dark Brown,	Blue Gray,	Pale Straw.
24. Golden Green,	Red Purple,	Warm Gray,	Ivory.
25. Maroon,	Olive,	Straw,	Pale Rose.
26. Purple,	Blue Green,	Soft Pink,	Blue.
27. Claret,	Fawn or Buff,	Gray Blue,	Pale Fawn.
28. Claret,	Blue Gray,	Pale Dog Rose,	Gray.
29. Deep Blue,	Pink,	Pale Buff,	Vellum.
30. Deep Blue,	Light Golden Tint	Lavender,	Vellum.
31. Stone Color,	Light Gray,	Pale Straw,	Blue Gray.

The decorators of the country are its instructors in art although sometimes questions of finance may compel them to cater to the tastes of people who deprecate any departure from the monotone. The nation as a whole is color blind in decoration, and the best writers on the subject of color harmony will give learned dissertations on the theories of color, but when they come to discuss its practical application to the wall, fail utterly to give a single idea on the subject. The above table of pure contrasts will furnish a foundation for the superstructure of the decorator, as far as color effects are concerned. Many other combinations will suggest themselves, and if such a system of decoration were once established, it would naturally grow into a craze, and decorators everywhere would find a greater demand for their services than they now do by being content with their role of apostle or negative effects in color decoration.

THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER for January is rich in suggestion and illustration for those who contemplate building new homes or refitting old ones. The artistic cover in blue and yellow would tempt one to look inside, even if one were not already anxious to see the new designs. Almost the whole field of art is covered in the January number. Artists in every line get useful hints and new ideas therefrom.—*Uniontown (Pa.) News*.

The February issue of THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, an admirable and extraordinarily useful magazine, is as full of meat as usual, and presents an unusual wealth of household art information and designs for windows, doors and the like. It includes representations of the first and second Price prize designs—a drawing room by Emery Roth, of Chicago, and an ingrain carpet by Miss Grovina R. Boyer, of West Philadelphia. The "Home Workshop" department and the general decorative articles are up to the high standard always attained by this publication.—*N. Y. Mail and Express*, Feb. 7.